

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 94) encouraging the elimination of harmful fishing subsidies that contribute to overcapacity in commercial fishing fleets worldwide and that lead to the overfishing of global fish stocks, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. Con. Res. 94

Whereas nearly 1,000,000,000 people around the world depend on fish as their primary source of dietary protein;

Whereas the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has found that 75 percent of the world's fish populations are currently fully exploited, over exploited, significantly depleted, or recovering from overexploitation;

Whereas scientists have estimated that a significant percentage of big predator fish such as tuna, marlin, and swordfish are gone from the world's oceans as a result of overfishing by foreign fishing fleets;

Whereas the global fishing fleet capacity is estimated to be up to 250 percent greater than is needed to catch what the ocean can sustainably produce;

Whereas the Congress recognized the threat of overfishing to our oceans and economy and therefore included the requirement to end overfishing in the United States by 2011 in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-479);

Whereas the United States Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission identified overcapitalization of the global fishing fleets as a major contributor to the decline of economically important fish populations;

Whereas harmful fishing subsidies encourage overcapitalization and overfishing; support destructive fishing practices such as high seas trawling that would not otherwise be economically viable; and amount to billions of dollars annually;

Whereas such subsidies have also been documented to support illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing, which impacts commercial fisheries in the United States and around the world both economically and ecologically;

Whereas harmful fishing subsidies are concentrated in relatively few countries, putting other fishing countries, including the United States, at an economic disadvantage;

Whereas the United States is a world leader in advancing policies to eliminate harmful fishing subsidies that support overcapacity and promote overfishing; and

Whereas a wide range of countries are currently engaged in historic negotiations to end harmful fishing subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),*  
That the United States  
should continue to promote the elimination of harmful fishing subsidies that lead to--

- (1) overcapitalization;
- (2) overfishing; and
- (3) illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. *Christensen*) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. *Cannon*) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I commend the chairwoman of the Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans, Congresswoman **MADELEINE BORDALLO**, for introducing House Concurrent Resolution 94. This resolution will encourage the United States to support the elimination of

foreign fishing subsidies that lead to overcapacity and overfishing in global fisheries.

House Concurrent Resolution 94, as amended, resolves that the United States will continue to support efforts to eliminate harmful subsidies issued by foreign governments to their fishing fleets. These subsidies reduce the cost of fishing to foreign fishermen, making fishing a profitable enterprise where it otherwise would not be, and leading to overcapitalization, overfishing and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. The end result is that foreign fishing subsidies hurt American fishermen who have to compete against subsidized foreign fishing.

We support this noncontroversial resolution, as amended, and commend Ms. *Bordallo* for her leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 94, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Concurrent Resolution 94 has been adequately explained by the majority, and I urge adoption of the resolution.

- [Begin Insert]

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 94 expresses our support for ending the fishing subsidies given to foreign fishermen. I appreciate the chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, *Nick Rahall*, and the Ranking Republican, *Don Young*, for their assistance in moving this legislation.

Foreign governments' subsidies to fishermen are common in many countries around the world. Too little of these subsidies go toward beneficial purposes, such as improving fisheries management and science. Instead, they typically are used to offset fishing costs, for example, by providing support for fuel consumption and vessel construction.

The subsidies artificially decrease the cost of fishing for foreign fishermen, making fishing a profitable trade when it would not be otherwise. The subsidies increase the rate of overfishing worldwide. Current estimates reveal that the sheer number of vessels actively fishing around the world today is up to 250 percent greater than is sustainable, according to the World Wildlife Fund.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has found that 75 percent of the world's fisheries are fully exploited, over exploited, depleted, or recovering from depletion. There is clearly no need to expand

the world's fishing fleets beyond their current capacity. Quite the contrary. By eliminating the subsidies that lead to fleet expansion, we can reduce some of this pressure.

The United States--like other countries--reserves to American fishermen and women the exclusive right to fish within 200 nautical mile of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Hundreds of foreign vessels each year, however, are intercepted while fishing illegally in U.S. waters. This rise in illegal fishing, most certainly contributed to by the overcapacity in the world's fleets, is placing additional pressure on our already exploited resources, damaging our marine ecosystems, and taking away potential revenue from our domestic fishing industry. In 2006 alone, the United States Coast Guard intercepted 164 vessels fishing in our EEZ.

In my home district of Guam the problem of illegal fishing is significant. The Western Central Pacific area is considered one of the Coast Guard's three highest threat areas for illegal foreign fishing. In 2006, the Coast Guard recorded 11 incidents of illegal foreign fishing in the Western Central Pacific area. Since 2000, the Coast Guard has intercepted an average of 34 vessels per year. And this only represents the vessels that are being caught.

The countries whose vessels are the most likely to be found illegally fishing in the U.S. EEZ are also countries that provide large capacity-increasing subsidies to their fishing fleets. Because enforcement is so difficult, it is even more important that we attack the issue at its root by encouraging worldwide capacity reduction and by discouraging other countries from making it economically feasible for their vessels to travel into our waters to fish.

While we have no direct control over the actions of foreign governments, the Doha Round of the current World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations have placed the United States in a unique position to influence the future use of harmful fisheries subsidies by other countries. Through these negotiations the United States has an opportunity to exercise its leadership internationally in encouraging the elimination of subsidies that increase fishing capacity and that promote overfishing. By passing this concurrent resolution, Congress can demonstrate to the world its support for our government as they move forward with these negotiations.

I strongly urge my colleagues to take a strong stance against harmful foreign fishing subsidies by supporting this House Concurrent Resolution 94.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 94, encouraging the elimination of harmful fishing subsidies that contribute to overcapacity in commercial fishing fleets worldwide and that lead to the over-fishing of global fish stocks.

I commend my esteemed colleague from Guam, the Chairwoman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans for

submitting this concurrent resolution. She understands the severe impact that over-fishing has on our world's oceans and this resolution is an important step in gaining the cooperation of other nations in managing our shared ocean resources responsibly.

According to a 2006 scientific study, there may be no more commercial fish stocks left in the sea by 2050. As the report states, since 1950 29% of the world's commercial fish species have already collapsed. If we do not change our course and stop over-fishing, our children could be the first generation to face entirely empty oceans.

One major contributor to this precipitous decline in global fish stocks is the huge overcapacity of our global fishing fleets. By some accounts, the current fishing fleet capacity is 250% of what is needed to catch the maximum sustainable yield from the oceans. In many instances, this overcapacity is fueled by harmful subsidies provided by a limited number of foreign governments to their fishing fleets, leading to over-fishing, and ecologically unsound bottom-trawling in international waters.

Through our nation's laws, such as the Magnuson-Stevens Act, we have established a strong federal policy supporting sustainable fishing practices here in the United States. In order to successfully manage the world's limited ocean resources, however, we need to promote the elimination of these fishing subsidies with the cooperation of our neighbors in the world community. This Resolution is an important first step in developing a global plan to manage our oceans responsibly. Again, I thank my friend from Guam and I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 94, encouraging the elimination of these harmful fishing subsidies.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 94. I want to thank Chairwoman *Bordallo* and Chairman *Rahall* for their efforts on this resolution.

I know the issue of harmful foreign fishing subsidies is one of the key concerns of the West Virginia fishing fleet and I congratulate Mr. *Rahall* on his interest in this resolution.

All kidding aside, this issue is a global concern. Harmful foreign fishing subsidies that threaten the sustainability of legitimate fisheries and threaten the economic viability and international competitiveness of the U.S. fishing industry must be identified and eliminated.

Some foreign fishing fleets have been heavily subsidized by their governments and this has led to over exploitation of some important fish species.

Harmful subsidies not only put legitimately prosecuted fisheries in jeopardy of overfishing, but also put U.S. fishermen at an economic disadvantage in the global fish market.

However, we need to be careful when discussing subsidies because some subsidies are actually beneficial. Government programs which help fishermen reduce unnecessary bycatch, which aid efforts to develop ``clean'' fishing gear, which aid governments in monitoring or enforcing the fisheries, or which make the fishery safer for fishermen are all legitimate and beneficial governmental programs.

Harmful subsidies that increase the size and harvesting capabilities of fishing fleets beyond the capacity needed to sustainably harvest the quotas in a fishery can be harmful environmentally and economically.

While I support the main concept of this resolution--to place the House of Representatives on the record opposing harmful fishing subsidies by foreign governments--one statistic used in this resolution is misleading even though it is often quoted. The resolution uses the statistic that ``75 percent of the world's fish populations are currently fully exploited, over exploited, significantly depleted or recovering from overexploitation.'' Full exploitation of fisheries is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, the full utilization of our Nation's fisheries is a key purpose of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Admittedly, fully exploited fisheries need to be carefully managed, monitored, and enforced to keep them from becoming over exploited.

If you remove ``fully exploited'' from this statistic, the figure drops to approximately 25 percent. This figure, while much less dramatic, is still a concern that we need to address. Foreign subsidies that contribute to this figure need to be addressed.

The United States has already taken a leading role in addressing IUU fisheries and in addressing harmful foreign subsidies. I support these efforts and urge support of efforts to continue to reduce harmful foreign fishing subsidies.

- [End Insert]

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and therefore, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I also yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. *Christensen*) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 94, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.